

Miscellaneous.

PROVINCIAL.—The Great Western Docks at Plymouth are progressing night and day as the tides suit, with 400 to 500 men at work. —Holy Rhool Church, Southampton, is now in course of demolition. The walls exhibit great strength. —The tender of Mr. Watson, of Whittaker, for a lock-up at Exlington, for 470*l.*, has been selected by the authorities from a list comprising others ranging from 710*l.* to 590*l.* —The foundation-stone of Christ Church, Timperley, was laid on Monday week before last. It is to be in the Norman style, with tower and spire, and built of Run-corn (red) stone. The architect is Mr. J. Bayley, the contractor Mr. Samuel Delves, and the mason Mr. Wm. Gibson, all of Altrincham. —The Earl of Ripon is to erect six almshouses, in commemoration of his son's majority. —A new cast-iron bridge has been erected at Alibury by Mr. John Hodgson, of Carlisle, engineer, and Mr. Pearson, of Solway Foundry, Maryport, the contractor. —The north and south eleventh stories of Carlisle Cathedral are now restored; Mr. Nelson, of Carlisle, was the builder. —The new bridge at Asbestell, which fell last year while in progress, is now completed on the same principle. It is of one span, of 136 feet, of rubble Whinstone, crossing the Tweed. —New barracks are to be built in Dublin, Tipperary, Ennis, and Clonmel. Sixty new workhouses are also to be erected throughout Ireland next year. —Barracks and workhouses! We would rather see the building trades flourishing under other auspices. But how lowering significant of the actual past and the possible future of poor Ireland!

THE INSURANCE OF IRON SHIPS.—The high rate of insurance demanded by underwriters generally upon iron ships, has led to an attempt to form a club or mutual insurance association for these and iron steam-boats only, upon the same principle as those established in the North of England for the insurance of wooden ships. Owners of iron ships have long complained of the high premiums charged on iron bottoms compared with wooden ships in similar trades, and they will now have the opportunity of showing conclusively their faith in the safety of this comparatively untried class of ships by joining the association. Mr. Gibson, of Gracechurch-street, London, is the moving party. That the mutual principle is the only right one there can be no question.

THE CITY SEWERS.—The select committee of the Court of Sewers of the city of London, to whom the new act was referred for examination, have recommended to the court, amongst other things,—that the constitution of the commission be continued as at present; that the meeting of the commissioners be hereafter held monthly; that a committee of 12 commissioners, besides the chairman, be appointed for general purposes, to meet once a week upon the ordinary business, and oftener if required; that the present number of four inspectors of pavements be retained, and that they superintend the private drainage within their respective districts, as well as the other works hitherto executed by them; and that one inspector of sewers be continued. They have also directed abstracts of the clauses in relation to graveyards and interments to be printed separately, for the use of the clergy, churchwardens, sextons, and others. We have not overlooked the striking difference of opinion on several important points, between Messrs. Walker, Brunel, and W. Cubitt, set forth in their report on the city sewers, and the officers of the metropolitan commission. We shall take an early opportunity to refer to them.

THE IRON TRADE.—A Birmingham contemporary, in the interest of the 'great masters,' complains of "the progressive reductions at which Welsh iron continues to be forced into the London and Liverpool markets, and the probable results that may be expected from such a system;" and states that "it can no longer be denied that sales have been made at unusually low rates, far below what is openly acknowledged." The trade at Merthyr, according to the *Bristol Journal*, "is in a very depressed state, this staple manufacture of the district selling almost at ruinously low prices, and rumour has it that we are on the eve of another reduction."

SANITARY PROGRESS.—A Government inspector has advertised his intention to proceed to Worcester, and take evidence on 4th instant. —A like announcement has been made by the same gentleman, Mr. G. T. Clerk, to the Stratford-on-Avon authorities that he will take evidence there on 16th inst. —Notice has been given by the Board of Health that an inspector will shortly proceed to Whitehaven on a similar official visit. —A public meeting is to be held at Carlisle on the 12th, to consider the propriety of adopting the Health Act. It is suspected that the mortality is 23 in every 1,000 per annum, and therefore renders the Act compulsory. The council, at all events, appear to appreciate its more permanent gifts, even although the Nuisances Act is in temporary operation, and is being carried out with vigour and success. —At Sheffield, under the latter Act, several inspectors have been appointed by the guardians, and no even casual visitor to Sheffield can fail to see and feel that they will have work to do. —A sanitary committee has been appointed at Romsey to carry out the regulations of the Board of Health, and the guardians have appointed an inspection of nuisances.

LECTURES AT THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS.—Professor Ansted has given three lectures of his course on the structure and phenomena of the earth, in reference to the theory and practice of landscape painting. The first lecture included a general account of the phenomena of the earth's surface as affecting the art of painting and the principles of drawing.—The atmosphere; its use and influence.—The nature and phenomena of light and colour.—The effects of water on landscape.—Mixtures of water and air.—Atmospheric, optical, and other effects resulting. In the second the professor gave an account of the structure of the earth, and the nature and characteristics of rock masses.—The general peculiarities of scenery with reference to geological structure.—And described different kinds of rocks that have most influence on picturesque scenery. The third lecture treated of the characteristics of scenery where limestone is the prevailing rock.—Remarkable variety of limestone scenery, and cause of it.—Limestone scenery of mountain character, jagged and rough as in the Alps.—Broken table-land as in the carboniferous limestone of Yorkshire and the oolitic rocks of the Franconian Switzerland.—Rounded hills as in Ireland.—Smooth scooped out coombs, as in the chalk of Sussex.—Bold cliffs and isolated pinnacles or needles, as at the back of the Isle of Wight, &c.—Stepped terraces, as in the oolitic districts of England.—Grotesque limestone cliffs on the coast of Durham, Canada, &c.—Varieties of effect from colour, weathering, vegetable covering, &c. The fourth lecture, to be given on the 6th, will treat of sandstone scenery.—Mountain districts and peculiarities of mineral structure, and prevalence of the harder varieties.—Remarkable appearances arising from the action of currents of water.—The Saxon Switzerland.—The scenery of the back of the Isle of Wight.—The sands of Alum Bay and Whithy.—Peculiarities of colour and vegetable covering in sand-rocks will be alluded to. Permission to attend these and other lectures here is liberally accorded to any who apply.

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.—The greatest interest has been excited throughout the country by the announcements which have been made on this subject, and we are asked by a dozen correspondents for a further opinion upon it. All in good time. When we say that there are at this time three parties waiting "to specify," whose inventions have been admitted by the law officers to be distinct, they will see that patience and caution are desirable. An experiment made on the Great Western Railway a short time since with an electric apparatus, invented by M. Le Moit, is described by some of our contemporaries as singularly successful. Unluckily, however, paragraphs to this effect constantly find their way into print, when in truth they are little deserved.

CHESTER TRAINING SCHOOL COMPETITION.—We received a letter, too late for insertion, directing attention to the unsatisfactory terms of the advertisement for designs in this case; and to some still less satisfactory replies to private inquiries. Would-be competitors should take the hint.

MALLEABLE IRON LEVER BRIDGE.—Mr. Gladstone, in his paper on a plan for constructing a malleable iron lever bridge, mentioned last week, noticed the bridges of the ancients, as shewing a continuous history of civil engineering accurately traced through twenty-six centuries. The distinction of the age we live in, as compared with that of former ages, is, that the applications of science are for the purposes of peace and unity among men, while the genius of man was formerly used as a means for tyranny and aggression. The introduction of iron, as the material of which to construct a bridge, was noticed, and the mode of its application alluded to. Having called attention to the first application of iron in the construction of the bridge at Coalbrook Dale, also the bridge at Southwark, to those on the principle of suspension at Conway and Menai, and to the last great work, the tubular bridge at Conway, he proceeded to describe the plan on which he proposes to construct bridges of wrought iron, of almost any required span. It consists of bars of wrought iron somewhat in the form of double T iron: these he proposes to rivet together, or fix by means of screws and nuts through their flanges, in a manner suited to the position in which they are to be placed. Thus, over the piers of the bridge where strength is required, the bars are fixed so as to form a solid, while as the arms of the lever become extended they are placed so as to form an open iron-work of a light and elegant character. The whole of the bars are fixed in a horizontal position, and, in addition to other fastenings, are to be tied by diagonal rods or braces. The advantages which the author considers his plan to possess over other plans are, that of enabling bridges of any span to be built without a centering, whereby a great saving is effected, also in enabling a flatter roadway to be obtained, while a higher waterway is insured than can be obtained by any plan in which the arch springing from the pier is made use of.

RAILWAYS IN SYDNEY.—The Legislative Council of Sydney, New South Wales, have resolved unanimously—1. That the time has arrived when the formation of railways in the colony ought to be commenced. 2. That to facilitate the speedy formation of a company for carrying out such a means of transit, it is expedient that the Government and the Legislature should hold out some peculiar inducement. 3. That a grant of Crown land in fee simple ought to be made to any company incorporated by an Act of the Council, not only of the quantity required along the line for the construction of the railway, but that by way of bonus the company should also be permitted to make selections of other portions of land, free of charge, to a reasonable extent. 4. That in addition, the Legislature ought to guarantee for a limited term of years, the regular payment to the shareholders of a dividend at a rate not exceeding 6 per cent. per annum upon the first 100,000*l.* of the capital subscribed. 5. That as a large amount of money is lying unemployed, and consequently unproductive, in the savings' bank, the council is of opinion that a sum not exceeding 30,000*l.* might be advantageously invested by the Government, in behalf of that institution, in shares in any such company. And 6. That his Excellency the Governor be requested to bring the subject generally under the notice of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the view of obtaining the sanction of her Majesty's Government to such portions of the recommendations as cannot be carried into effect by the Colonial Government.

BLIND BUILDERS.—Tenders for building a part open shed for breaking stones and picking oakum, at Hampstead Workhouse:—

Walker and Soper	2133	0	0
Burton	113	0	0
Stone	98	10	0
Hart	98	10	0
Johnson and Son	93	0	0
Lamprell (accepted)	85	0	0

Yet worse remains behind. The following tenders were opened on Tuesday last, for alterations at a house in Threadneedle-street; Mr. A. Gwilt, Architect:—

Sherwood	2397
Hawley	394
Rider	355
Sanders	338
Wallen	253
Green (accepted)	170!